

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (canceled)

Claim 2. (previously presented) A negative electrode active material for use in an alkaline cell comprising a dry mixture of a conventional alloyed zinc powder and a powder of Bi as an additional metal incorporated in said mixture in an amount of 50 - 1000 ppm by weight based on the amount of said conventional alloyed powder.

Claim 3. (canceled)

Claim 4 (currently amended) The negative electrode active material for use in an alkaline cell according to Claim ~~1~~ or 2, wherein said additional metal is a metallic powder with an average particle size of 100 μm or less.

Claim 5. (canceled)

Claim 6. (currently amended) A negative electrode active material for use in an alkaline cell of low gas generation comprising a mixture of a powder of Bi and a conventional alloyed zinc powder, said Bi being in an amount of 50 to 1000 ppm by weight based on the amount of said conventional alloyed powder, said mixture being prepared by dry mixing said powder of Bi and said conventional alloyed zinc powder.

Claim 7. (currently amended) A method of preparing a negative electrode active material for use in an alkaline cell comprising mixing a conventional alloyed zinc powder with a powder of Bi in an amount of 50 to 1000 ppm by weight based on the amount of said conventional alloyed powder as an additional metal.

Claim 8. (previously presented) A method of preparing a negative electrode active material for use in an alkaline cell comprising mixing a conventional alloyed zinc powder with a powder of Bi as an additional metal, said additional metal being added in an amount of 50 to 1000 ppm by weight based on the weight of the conventional alloyed zinc powder.

Claim 9. (canceled)

Claim 10. (original) The method of preparing a negative electrode active material for use in an alkaline cell according to Claim 7 or 8, wherein said additional metal is a metallic powder with an average particle size of 100 μm or less.

Claim 11. (canceled)

Claim 12. (currently amended) A method of preparing a negative electrode active material for use in an alkaline cell of low gas generation comprising dry mixing a conventional alloyed zinc powder with a powder of Bi in an amount of 50 to 1000 ppm by weight based on the amount of said conventional alloyed powder.

Claim 13. (canceled)

Claim 14. (currently amended) The negative electrode active material for use in an alkaline cell according to ~~claim 1 or claim 2~~, wherein the bismuth is added in an amount of 500 to 1000 ppm by weight based on the amount of said conventional alloyed powder.

Claim 15. (currently amended) The negative electrode active material according to Claim \pm 2, wherein the alloyed zinc includes at least one element selected from the group consisting of Al, Bi, In, Ga, Sn and Pb.

Claim 16. (currently amended) The negative electrode active material according to Claim \pm 2, wherein the alloyed zinc contains Bi and In.

Claim 17. (currently amended) The negative electrode active material according to Claim \pm 2, wherein the alloyed zinc contains Bi, Al and In.

Claim 18. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 12, wherein the low gas generation is low hydrogen gas generation.

Claim 19. (canceled)

Claim 20. (previously presented) The negative electrode active material for use in an alkaline cell according to Claim 2, which consists essentially of said dry mixture of a conventional alloyed zinc powder and a powder of Bi as an additional metal.

Claim 21. (previously presented) The negative electrode active material for use in an alkaline cell according to Claim 6, which consists essentially of said dry mixture of a conventional alloyed zinc powder and a powder of Bi as an additional metal.

Claim 22. (currently amended) The method according to claim 7, wherein the mixing is dry mixing, and the negative electrode material consists essentially of a dry mixture of [[a]] said conventional alloyed zinc powder and [[a]] said powder of Bi as an additional metal.

Claim 23. (currently amended) The method according to claim 8, wherein the mixing is dry mixing, and the negative electrode material consists essentially of a dry mixture of [[a]] said conventional alloyed zinc powder and [[a]] said powder of Bi as an additional metal.

Claim 24 (currently amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein the negative electrode material consists essentially of a dry mixture of **[[a]] said** conventional alloyed zinc powder and **[[a]] said** powder of Bi as an additional metal.